

JUDE

INTRODUCTION

Studying the little Epistle of Jude is like working a gold mine because of all the rich nuggets which are here just for the mining.

The writer is Jude, which is the English form of the name Judas. Jude, he tells us here, is the brother of James. Now, in the Gospel records there are three or four men by the name of James, and there are three men by the name of Judas. We are helped in our identification of the writer of this epistle by the record in Matthew: "Is not this the carpenter's son? is not his mother called Mary? and his brethren, James, and Joses, and Simon, and Judas?" ([Matt. 13:55](#)). So two of these brothers, James, the writer of the Epistle of James, and Judas, the writer of the Epistle of Jude, are half-brothers of the Lord Jesus Christ. There are two other men by the name of Judas, and they both were among the twelve apostles of our Lord. The best known, of course, is Judas Iscariot, the apostle who betrayed the Lord. The other apostle by the name of Judas is distinguished in this way: "Judas saith unto him, not Iscariot, Lord how is it that thou wilt manifest thyself unto us, and not unto the world?" ([John 14:22](#), italics mine). The way he is identified is just that he is not Judas Iscariot. Therefore we believe that the writer of this epistle is the third Judas which Scripture mentions, Judas, the half-brother of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Notice that neither James nor Jude identify themselves as brothers of the Lord Jesus. James introduces himself as ". . . a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ . . ." ([James 1:1](#)). And Jude introduces himself as "the servant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James." Jude calls himself the servant, meaning "bond slave," of Jesus Christ. Why didn't James and Jude capitalize on their blood relationship with Jesus? I think the reason is obvious. Neither James nor Jude believed in the messianic claims of Jesus until after His resurrection. It was the Resurrection that convicted them and confirmed to them that Jesus was who He claimed to be. Up until that time they thought He had just gone "off" on religion, that He was, as the Scripture puts it, beside Himself. But after His resurrection they became believers. You see, it was possible to grow up in a home with Jesus in the days of His flesh and not recognize Him. I believe we see in [Psalm 69](#) that He suffered loneliness and misunderstanding during those growing up years in Nazareth. Therefore His brothers felt that, although they had been reared with Him, they hadn't really known Him at that time. As Paul expressed it later, "Wherefore henceforth know we no man after the flesh: yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we him no more" ([2Cor. 5:16](#)). Jude, though a half-brother, recognizes that Jesus is the glorified Christ and that human relationship is not meaningful to him in any way. He had to come to Christ as a sinner, accepting Him as Savior just as anyone else did.

By the way, this is the marvelous answer of both James and Jude to an attitude which arose after the era of the apostles. There was a brief period when the family of Jesus was revered in a rather superstitious and sacred way as if they were something special. Actually, they were not superior; they were simply human beings who had to come to Christ just as you and I must come to Christ.

I have always felt that Protestantism has ignored Mary. She was a wonderful person. It was no accident that she was chosen of God to bear the Son of God, but that does not mean she is to be lifted up above all other people. She takes her own rightful place. Elizabeth called her blessed among women, not blessed above women, and Mary herself confessed her need of a Savior (see [Luke 1:47](#)). Therefore the brief period through which the church went when the family of the Lord Jesus was elevated to a very high position would certainly have been opposed by James and Jude. They themselves took the position of being merely bond slaves of Jesus Christ.

This book was written around B.C. 66-69.

The theme of the book is assurance in days of apostasy. Jude picked up the pen of inspiration to write on some theme or truth concerning the gospel and our salvation. He could have chosen the subject of justification by faith, but Paul had written on that in Romans. He could have chosen the resurrection of Christ, but Paul had written on that in 1 Corinthians. Or he could have chosen the doctrine of reconciliation, but Paul had written on that in 2 Corinthians. Probably Jude could have written on the great subject of faith, but Paul had written on that in Galatians. Or he could have selected the church as the body of Christ, but Paul had written on that in Ephesians. Or he could have selected the person of Christ, but Paul had written on that in Colossians. Jude could have written about our Great High Priest, but the writer to the Hebrews had already written on that. Or he could have chosen the subject of fellowship, but John was going to write on that later on. So the Spirit of God caused him to develop another subject rather than to develop one of the great doctrines. The Spirit of God arrested his purpose before he could even put down his subject and directed him into another channel. Jude's subject is the coming apostasy. He gives us the most vivid account that we have of the apostasy, and he presents it in a very dramatic manner. Jude hangs out a red lantern on the most dangerous curve along the highway the church of Christ is traveling. Jude describes in vivid terms and with awe-inspiring language the frightful conditions that were coming in the future. This little epistle is like a burglar alarm. Apostates have broken into the church. They came in the side door while nobody was watching. And this little epistle is like an atom bomb. The first bomb did not fall on Hiroshima or Nagasaki; it fell when Jude wrote this little epistle. It's an atom bomb, and it exploded in the early church as a warning.

Jude gives the only record in Scripture regarding the contention of Satan with Michael the archangel over the body of Moses. It is a very remarkable passage of Scripture.

Also, Jude records the prophecy of Enoch, which is found nowhere else in Scripture. He sees the Lord coming with ten thousands of His saints.

The little prophecy of Jude affords a fitting introduction to the Book of Revelation.

Outline

I. Occasion of the Epistle, [Jude 1:1-3](#)

- A. Assurance for Believers, [Jude 1:1-2](#)
(Sanctified, kept, called)
- B. Change of Theme to Apostasy, [Jude 1:3](#)

II. Occurrences of Apostasy, [Jude 1:4-16](#)

- A. Inception of Apostasy, [Jude 1:4](#)
- B. Israel in Unbelief Destroyed in Wilderness, [Jude 1:5](#)
- C. Angels Rebelled; Kept in Chains, [Jude 1:6](#)
- D. Sodom and Gomorrah Sinned in Sexuality; Destroyed by Fire, [Jude 1:7](#)
- E. Modern Apostate Teachers Identified, [Jude 1:8-10](#)
(Despise authority)
- F. Cain, Balaam, Korah -- Examples of Apostates, [Jude 1:11](#)
- G. Modern Apostate Teachers Defined and Described, [Jude 1:12-16](#)

III. Occupation of Believers in Days of Apostasy, [Jude 1:17-25](#)

- A. Believers Warned by Apostles That These Apostates Would Come, [Jude 1:17-19](#)
- B. What Believers Must Do in Days of Apostasy, [Jude 1:20-25](#)
 - 1. Build Up
 - 2. Pray In
 - 3. Keep Themselves
 - 4. Look For
 - 5. Have Compassion
 - 6. Save Others
 - 7. Hate Evil

Chapter 1

Occasion Of The Epistle (1:1)

In the first three verses, Jude gives the occasion for his writing this epistle. Jude will tell us that he intended to write on some theme of our salvation, but the Spirit of God put up a red warning sign and instructed him to call attention to the days of apostasy which would be coming upon the church.

Assurance For Believers (1:1-2)

Jude, the servant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James, to them that are sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ, and called [[Jude 1:1](#)].

"Jude" as I pointed out in the Introduction, is the English form of the name Judas. In the New Testament, there are three men who bear the name Judas, but we have very good evidence which identifies the writer of this epistle as the half-brother of the Lord Jesus Christ.

"The servant of Jesus Christ." The word servant is literally "bond slave." He claims no blood relationship with the Lord Jesus as if that would give him a superior position. This ought to lay to rest the notion which arose in the early church, in the post-apostolic period, that the family of Jesus was to be held in reverence because they were super-

duper folk. Dr. Marvin R. Vincent, the outstanding Greek scholar, comments in Word Studies in the New Testament:

That Jude does not allude to his relationship to the Lord may be explained by the fact that the natural relationship in his mind would be subordinate to the spiritual (see [Luke 11:27, 28](#)), and that such a designation would, as Dean Alford remarks, "have been in harmony with those later and superstitious feelings with which the next and following ages regarded the Lord's earthly relatives."

"The brother of James," as we have said in the Introduction, is the way Jude identifies himself. Both James and Jude were half-brothers of the Lord Jesus, and James was the writer of the epistle which bears his name. He was mentioned by the apostle Paul as one of the pillars in the church at Jerusalem.

"To them that are sanctified by God the father." The Greek text of Nestle and that of Westcott and Hort, which are the best Greek texts that we have, use the verb *agapao*, meaning "to love," instead of *hagiazō*, meaning "to sanctify." Most scholars agree that "to love" is more accurate than "to sanctify," and it makes it a little bit more precious to our hearts to know that we are loved or beloved by God the Father.

I would like to share with you the translation of Kenneth S. Wuest, the late Greek scholar at the Moody Bible Institute. His translation (Word Studies from the Greek New Testament), though a bit involved, in many places brings out the original meaning:

Jude, a bondsman of Jesus Christ and brother of James, to those who by God the Father have been loved and are in a state of being the permanent objects of His love, and who for Jesus Christ have been guarded and are in a permanent state of being carefully watched, to those who are called ones.

This is a wonderful passage of Scripture. We are beloved by God the Father and preserved for Jesus Christ.

There are several words I must deal with in this text because of their importance. The first word is preserved. It is this word that gives us the key to the Book of Jude which presents the apostasy as it is presented nowhere else in Scripture. How frightful it is! But Jude doesn't write just to frighten the daylights out of us. Nor does he write just to draw a vivid picture for our information; he gives us this background in order that he might give assurance in days of apostasy. He uses the word keep four times, which is what the word preserve means. They are kept in Jesus Christ -- God is the one who keeps them. Notice [Jude 1:21](#) says "keep yourselves in the love of God"; and [Jude 1:24](#) says "now unto him that is able to keep you from falling." You may call it anything you want to, but it gives assurance of salvation to the believer even in the dark days of apostasy.

As we shall see, you and I are presently living in the apostasy. How much farther we will go into it before the Rapture, I do not know -- nor does anyone else know. But we definitely are in times of apostasy.

Now looking again at the word preserved, it is interesting to note that in the physical world there are two ways of preserving food. One is with vinegar, and the other is with sugar. There are many saints in our day who I think are preserved, all right, but they are

preserved in vinegar -- that is, they act that way. They have a vinegar disposition. Also, there are saints who are preserved in sugar. They are sugar and spice and everything nice -- and these are not all women either. But even those who seem to be preserved in vinegar are preserved by God's grace, which preserves or keeps them. The apostle John will tell us in [Revelation 12:11](#) that ". . . they overcame him [Satan] by the blood of the Lamb . . .", and that is the only way believers are going to make it through the Great Tribulation. And that is the only way we are going to overcome -- by the blood of the Lamb. There is no merit or power in us to overcome the Evil One.

I must resort back to the illustration which the Lord Jesus Himself gave when He said, "I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep" ([John 10:11](#)). Then He goes on to talk about His sheep, "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand" ([John 10:27-29](#)).

Now if a sheep is kept in safety, it is no credit to the sheep. A sheep cannot defend itself. It doesn't have sharp fangs and claws to fight its enemy. Neither can it run. A jackrabbit can't defend itself either, but a jackrabbit can get away from trouble. A sheep can't even do that. A sheep is helpless. When one of God's sheep says that he knows he is saved, he is not boasting of his own merit; he is boasting of his Shepherd. He has a wonderful Shepherd. My friend, if you are saying that you are not sure of your salvation, you really are reflecting upon your Shepherd, because He says that He can keep you. He says that no created thing is able to take you out of His Father's hand. It is not a question of whether or not you can hold on to Him. It is a question of His holding on to you. He says that He can, and it is a matter of your trusting Him.

You see, salvation rests upon the Word of God. It is up to you whether you will believe Him or not. Your assurance of salvation rests upon that because He has made it very clear that you have a sure salvation. Here in Jude we are presented with the dark days of apostasy, and God still says that He is able to keep His own.

"And called." Not only are we preserved in Jesus Christ, safe in Him, but we are also called. The word called, as it is used in Scripture, is not only an invitation that is sent out, but it is an invitation that is sent out and accepted and made real because of the Spirit of God. Let me give you Paul's statement as found in [1Corinthians 1:22-24](#): "For the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom: but we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumblingblock, and unto the Greeks foolishness; but unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God" (italics mine). My friend, if you have found in Christ the wisdom and power of God and you have trusted Him, you are one of "the called." The invitation is sent out, and when it is accepted and believed, then you are the called. That is exactly what Jude means here, and Paul spelled it out for us as well.

Mercy unto you, and peace, and love, be multiplied [[Jude 1:2](#)].

We need to recognize the difference between these three words: mercy, peace, and love; then we need to see the strong relationship between them.

Love is an attribute of God. Because God is love, He is merciful and has provided grace. The love of God encompasses all mankind -- "God so loved the world" (see [John 3:16](#)). It is not His will that any should perish. Today He loves every human being on this earth. He has no favorites. Way back in the Book of Exodus, God made it clear to even a man like Moses that He did not answer his prayer because he was Moses; "And he said, I . . . will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will shew mercy on whom I will shew mercy" ([Exod. 33:19](#)). God answered Moses' prayer because He found the explanation in Himself; He treats all His creatures alike in that sense. My friend, God loves you today. If you knew how much He loves you, it would break your heart -- you would be in tears.

Now you can keep from experiencing God's love, but you cannot keep Him from loving you. You can't keep the sun from shining, but you can put up an umbrella to keep the sun from shining on you. And there are certain umbrellas you can put up to keep from experiencing the love of God: the umbrella of resistance to His will, the umbrella of sin in your life, etc.

Although God loved you, He did not save you by love. You see, God has other attributes. He is holy. He is righteous. He is just. He simply cannot let down the bars of heaven and, by lowering His standards, bring you in. He cannot do that any more than a human judge can uphold the laws of the land and yet accept a bribe under the table for letting a criminal off. If he does that, he is a crooked judge. And if God is going to do that with human beings, He is no better than a crooked judge. I do not mean to be irreverent because God is not a crooked judge. God has to maintain His holiness and His righteousness and His justice.

"God so loved the world," and He loved the world with a merciful love, a love that had a concern and care for human beings. And because of it, He gave His only begotten Son -- He provided His Son as the substitute. Now God, on a righteous basis, can save a sinner if he will come to Him and accept His salvation. This is called the grace of God. "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast" ([Eph. 2:8-9](#)).

In *Synonyms of the New Testament* Dr. R. C. Trench, who was a great Greek scholar, made a clear distinction between these words:

While *charis* [grace] has thus reference to the sins of men, and is that glorious attribute of God which these sins call out and display, His free gift in their forgiveness, *eleos* [mercy], has special and immediate regard to the misery which is the consequence of these sins.

Now you can see that the grace of God, not the love of God, has to do with the sins of men. God has provided a Savior who has paid the penalty for sins. On that basis, God saves sinners. That is the grace of God.

However, sin has brought tragedy to the human family. We often hear the question: Why does a God of love permit cancer? Well, disease and death came to the human family as consequences of sin. God sees the misery that sin has caused, and the mercy of God goes out to man. God is rich in mercy. If you come to Him as a sinner and accept His salvation, He will save you by grace. Then, because He is rich in mercy, He will extend

His mercy to you. He will bring comfort to you at that time. He will help you and comfort your heart. You can trust Him in your time of need.

The fellow who is writing these words has had two major operations for cancer, and the doctors tell me the cancer is still in my body and can break out anytime. To be frank with you, from where I sit right now I have a great big question: Why? And I am asking the Lord why. But my only refuge is in my heavenly Father. I know He has the answer, although He hasn't told me what it is. What I'm asking from Him is mercy. He has already saved me by His grace, but now I want His mercy. Mercy is that love of His which goes out to us in our misery here upon this earth.

A sinner needs the grace of God, and he sure needs a whole lot of mercy -- I've been using a great deal of it these past few years.

Let me share with you from Dr. Trench again. I will repeat what I have already quoted and then go on:

While charis has thus reference to the sins of men, and is that glorious attribute of God which these sins call out and display, His free gift in their forgiveness, eleos, has special and immediate regard to the misery which is the consequence of these sins, being the tender sense of this misery displaying itself in the effort, which only the continued perverseness of man can hinder or defeat, to assuage and entirely remove it. . . . In the divine mind, and in the order of our salvation as conceived therein, the eleos (mercy) precedes the charis (grace). God so loved the world with a pitying love (herein was the eleos), that He gave His only begotten Son (herein the charis), that the world through Him might be saved (compare [Eph. 2:4](#); [Luke 1:78-79](#)). But in the order of the manifestation of God's purposes of salvation the grace must go before the mercy, the charis must go before and make way for the eleos. It is true that the same persons are the subjects of both, being at once the guilty and the miserable; yet the righteousness of God, which it is quite necessary should be maintained as His love, demands that the guilt should be done away before the misery can be assuaged; only the forgiven can be blessed.

God must pardon before He can heal. Men must be justified before they can be sanctified. In the order of the manifestation of God's purposes of salvation, the grace of God must go before the mercy of God. The grace must go before and take away and make way for the mercy of God.

The "peace" of God is that experience which comes to the heart that is trusting Christ. Paul says, "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ" ([Rom. 5:1](#), italics mine). Peace with God is to know that God is not difficult to get along with. He is not making it hard for me; He is not making it hard for you. He wants us to know that He hasn't anything against us now that we know that we are sinners and have trusted Christ as our Savior. The world may point its finger at you and reject you, but God has accepted you. He loves you, and He wants to give you that peace so that at night you can pillow your head on God's promises. "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose" ([Rom. 8:28](#)). Dr. R. A. Torrey used to call this verse a soft pillow for a tired heart. What a wonderful promise it is!

Change Of Theme To Apostasy (1:3)

Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints [[Jude 1:3](#)].

"Beloved." When Jude uses that term, it really means folk who are loved of God, God's beloved children.

"Common salvation." Let's understand that the word common is the English translation of the Greek word *koines*. The New Testament was not written in classical Greek but in *koine* Greek or common Greek, meaning that it was understood by everyone, educated and uneducated, all over the Roman Empire in the days of the apostles. When Jude said that he had intended to write of the "common salvation," he must have been referring to something that people throughout the Roman Empire would understand.

Now Jude says here that he was planning on writing on some facet of our salvation. It could have been on redemption, on the person of Christ, on sanctification, or any number of themes, but he didn't write on any of those themes because "it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints." The thought here is that the Holy Spirit detoured Jude from writing on some theme of the faith in order that he might sound a warning concerning the impending apostasy.

The apostasy is a departure from the faith, that is, from the apostles' doctrine. Apostasy was just a little cloud the size of a man's hand in Jude's day, but now it is a storm of hurricane force that fills the land. As Jude writes about the apostasy that was coming on the earth, we can see that many of the things he mentions are already taking place in the world in our day. My friend, the apostasy is not something we are looking forward to; the apostasy is here. It is all about us today.

"Needful." There was a compulsion, a necessity, a constraint upon Jude. He said, "When I was about to write to you about some great doctrine which the apostles gave us, a necessity was laid upon me instead to exhort you that you should earnestly contend for the faith."

"Contend." There are expositors who suggest that this means to contend on your knees. Well, I have never been able to find any authority for that view, but the thought here is to contend without being contentious. I wish we fundamentalists could contend for the fundamentals of the faith without being fiery and contentious. As Paul put it, "And the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt [ready] to teach, patient, in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth; and that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will" ([2Tim. 2:24-26](#)). The word contend, as Jude uses it, has in it the idea of agony. The Greek word is *epagonizesthai*, and we get our English word agony from the noun of this word. Instead of writing on some great doctrine, Jude is saying that we are to contend or defend the great doctrines of Christianity.

"Contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints." "The faith" was the body of truth given once for all. In the Book of Acts it is called the apostles' doctrine: "And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers" ([Acts 2:42](#)). Notice that the apostles' doctrine is the first thing mentioned. Since that is number one on God's church parade, our church is not a church unless it is doing just that.

We are told in [Ephesians 4:15](#) to speak the truth in love or, as someone has translated it, "truthing in love." My friend, if you are going to give out the truth, give it out in love. If you do not give it out in love, there is some question about whether or not you are actually giving out the truth. And we are to be ready to give an answer to anyone who asks us -- in meekness and fear. A believer should not have a short fuse and become angry when someone differs with him.

Dr. Kenneth S. Wuest has one of the finest books available which gives the literal translation of Jude. Notice his translation in Word Studies from the Greek New Testament:

Divinely-loved ones, when giving all diligence to be writing to you concerning the salvation possessed in common by all of us, I had constraint laid upon me to write to you, beseeching (you) to contend with intensity and determination for the Faith once for all entrusted into the safekeeping of the saints.

Occurrences Of Apostasy (1:3)

Now Jude will set before us the reason we should contend for the faith. Something is happening to the church, and Jude sounds an alarm.

Inception Of Apostasy (1:4)

For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ [[Jude 1:4](#)].

"Who were before of old ordained to this condemnation" should be made clear first of all. It actually means that they were written of beforehand. The word ordained is *prographo*, meaning "to write beforehand." It simply means that other writers had sounded the warning about apostates.

"There are certain men crept in unawares" -- they are creeps! Crept in is one of the most interesting phrases in the Greek language. It is *pareisduno*. *Duno* means "to enter"; the preposition *eis* means "into"; and *para* means "beside." It means "to enter alongside" or, as Dr. Vincent puts it in his commentary: "To get in by the side, to slip in a side door." This is the way the apostates have come into the church.

I have been in the church for many years. I have been and am still an ordained Presbyterian preacher -- although I am in no denomination today and have no denominational connections at all. As a young person I remember that the church was big and large sound in the faith. When I went to the denominational college, I began to discover that there were ministers who denied practically every tenet of the faith. That

opened up a new world to me. Then when I went to the denominational seminary, I found that the liberal element was still growing. The day came when I left that denomination and came to California. Here I entered another denomination, and when I saw it going into liberalism, I got out. I wasn't put out; I just stepped out voluntarily. During that long period I saw how these men were able to take over a church. They came in the side door. They came in by professing one thing and believing another. They did not come in the front door -- that is, they did not declare their doctrinal position. Many of our good laymen have been deceived by ministers like that. Scripture has warned about them. For instance, Paul wrote to the Corinthians: "For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works" ([2Cor. 11:13-15](#)). The expression "transforming themselves" in this verse is very interesting. It is in the Greek *metaschomatixontai*, meaning "the act of an individual who is changing his outward expression by assuming an expression put on from the outside." It is a method of Satan.

Over the years I have seen as many as a dozen strong, outstanding churches across America fall into the hands of liberalism by this method. It is the most deceitful method in the world. Let me give you an instance of one church. I won't give the location, because the chances are that you know one like it in the area in which you live. It was, at one time, a church in which the Word of God was preached, people were being saved, and hearts were being blessed. Then the pastor retired or resigned, and a new man appeared on the scene. When he met with the pulpit committee and met with the elders, they asked him about his doctrinal beliefs. He assured them that he believed in all the great doctrines of the faith. You see, he came in the side door because he really did not believe them. He only pretended to believe them and pretended to be sound in the faith. And the interesting thing is that his trial sermon sounded as though he were sound in the faith. He had probably read Spurgeon or Warfield or G. Campbell Morgan and had borrowed enough of their material to preach a good sermon. Hearing him, the congregation thought, This young man is just fine; so they called him as their pastor. But remember that he came in by the side door; he did not believe the doctrine that he preached. Before long they discovered that they had a liberal on their hands. Generally, fundamental churches consider ousting the preacher to be a bad method; so they tolerate him. However, my feeling is that since he came in by the side door, he should be booted out the back door. But they don't do that. Right at this moment I know of two or three churches which are being ruined by men who pretended to be what they were not.

Remember that Jude said that they "were before of old ordained to this condemnation" -- that is, they were written of beforehand. Jude is saying, "I'm not telling you something new -- others have written of this also and have warned you of that which is coming."

Paul is one who repeatedly warned of the apostate. The last time he went by Ephesus, at his last visit with the Ephesian elders, he gave this warning: "For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them. Therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to

warn every one night and day with tears" ([Acts 20:29-31](#)). Although Paul warned them of apostates, the day came when the Ephesian church yielded to them.

Paul also warned the young preacher Timothy: "Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away. For of this sort are they which creep into houses, and lead captive silly women laden with sins, led away with divers lusts" ([2Tim. 3:5-6](#)). One of the greatest movements we have seen in our day is the formation of women's Bible study classes all across this country. I thank God for them. However, it needs to be watched very carefully because, since it is a success, you will find that somebody is going to try the side door and slip in. In the history of the church there has never been a woman theologian, and that is very strange indeed. Also, it is true that women have played a prominent part in many of the cults and heresies that have come into the church. While I don't claim to be an authority in this field, it seems to me that a woman is built finer than a man. She has finer sensibilities and a closer perception than a man has. For this reason she needs to be treated with more care. I have to be more particular with my watch than I have to be with the motor in my car. There is a grave danger (and I have heard this voiced by several ministers across the country) of these women's movements operating totally outside the church and not cooperating with the church at all. This is also true of the youth movement which is taking place. Also, I have found in my radio ministry that I move largely outside the local church. However, I do try to work with the local church, and I believe that all of these movements should work with the local church if it is a Bible-believing church. Paul is warning about false teachers coming in the side door, and I believe that any movement today which the Spirit of God seems to be blessing needs to be watched very carefully because of the fact that the Devil is going to come in the side door if he can. And if you think he is coming in as the Devil, you are wrong. His ministers pretend to be ministers of light.

The final test, the acid test, of any movement is the teaching regarding the person of Jesus Christ. If it denies the deity of Christ, you can rule it out immediately, but you have to be very careful about this matter of the deity of Christ. There are many facets by which they can deny the deity of Christ and yet give the impression that they actually believe in Him as the Savior of the world. Simon Peter warns of this: "But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction" ([2Pet. 2:1](#)).

And Paul, writing to the Galatians, warns: "And that because of false brethren unawares brought in, who came in privily to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage" ([Gal. 2:4](#)). My friend, we need to guard every movement today which God is blessing. These organizations which are outside the church may go off on tangents because the ministers of Satan are waiting to come in the side door. "Ungodly men turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ." They are by nature ungodly men, and they do two things: (1) They distort and deny the grace of God -- "turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness"; and (2) they deny the deity of the Lord Jesus Christ -- "denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ."

"Ungodly" means that they simply leave God out of their lives.

It is important to evaluate whether or not a man who teaches and preaches the Word of God is a godly man. I was amazed to hear from a couple who, I thought, had good spiritual discernment. They attended the classes of a Bible teacher and were greatly impressed by him. In fact, they considered him outstanding. They were willing to tolerate the fact that this Bible teacher was having an open affair with a woman who was not his wife! A man may be an interesting Bible teacher and still be an ungodly man. We need to look at their lives. Are they leaving God out of their lives?

Lasciviousness is a very important word. I suppose the best synonym is wantonness because wantonness has in it the thought of lawlessness and arrogance -- doing as you please even if you offend the sensibilities of others. Jude says that the ungodly turn the grace of our God into lasciviousness -- into immorality. The apostle Paul warned the Galatian believers about the danger of turning the grace of God into license -- permitting them to live any way they pleased. "For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another" ([Gal. 5:13](#)).

Gross immorality characterizes the apostasy of our day. They have thrown overboard all of the great precepts of Scripture concerning morality, and they call it the new morality. There is a growing danger in this country of the church actually espousing and condoning gross immorality. One writer has said that "one of the troubles with the world is that people mistake sex for love, money for brains, and transistor radios for civilization." The creed of the present day, according to the late Dr. Wallace Petty, can be stated in the following six articles: "God is a creation of wishful thinking; religion is a mechanism of escape from reality; man is a glorified gorilla who asks too many questions and represses too many desires; morals are a matter of taste; love is an art; and life is a racket." That is the viewpoint of some folk in our day.

The wantonness that we are seeing is marked by an arrogant recklessness of justice. Another definition is "willfully malicious." Marriage is flouted and considered unessential. You may live with whomever you wish to live with in total disregard of the morality which builds homes and thereby builds a nation. As far back as 1959 Vice Admiral Robert Goldthwaite, Chief of Naval Air Training, told a large group of leading educators, businessmen, law enforcement officials, and others that there is "a surge of immorality in civilian and military life." He said that "moral decay" is an acute national problem, and there is urgent need to improve "moral leadership" among youth. During the years since then, the moral decay has reached such proportions that we should be alarmed. We ought to be very careful about the folk who are teaching in our churches. Are they teaching a loose morality? Jude warns us to be on our guard against that.

The other thing that characterizes an apostate is that he denies the Lord God and our Lord Jesus Christ. He will talk about God and the Lord Jesus, but he denies who and what they actually are.

In Jude's day the apostasy was Gnosticism. Gnosticism taught that the body was essentially evil, that all matter was evil, and that the spirit alone was good. The conclusion drawn from this was that it didn't matter what a man did with his body. He was free to satisfy the lusts of the body. He was free to practice blatant immorality,

shameless sin, and arrogantly and proudly to flout that sin publicly. That was a perversion of grace.

The same ideas have sprung up again today. The new morality is no newer than the old Gnosticism, the first heresy. The other facet of Gnosticism was a denial of the true God and true Man, our Lord Jesus Christ. That is the mark of an antichrist. John calls such people antichrists in his epistle. It is always the spirit of antichrist which denies the Lord Jesus Christ.

I have spent a long time on this verse because of the importance of the matters it sets before us.

Israel In Unbelief Destroyed In The Wilderness (1:5)

Now Jude is going to give us six examples of apostasy in the past.

Before we look at this section, let me remind you of what the apostasy is. Thayer gives this meaning for the Greek word *aphistemi*: "to remove, to withdraw, to go away, to depart." When the word is used in 2 Thessalonians, I take the position that it has a twofold meaning. It means the removal of the church since in Paul's first epistle to the Thessalonians he spoke of the rapture of the church. The Rapture must come first -- the *aphistemi*, the departure, the removal of the church. The removal of believers from the earth will lead to the total apostasy -- that is, the departure from the faith. Our Lord Jesus asked the question, ". . . when the Son of man cometh [to the earth], shall he find [the] faith . . . ?" ([Luke 18:8](#)). The way the question is couched in the Greek demands a negative answer. Therefore, the answer is no, He will not find the faith on the earth when He returns. There will be a total departure, a total apostasy. Now that cannot come about until the true believers are removed from the earth -- and, of course, this can occur at any moment.

Jude is now going to give us six examples of apostasy in the past; that is, departures from the faith. There will be three groups and then three individuals. First, the three groups --

I will therefore put you in remembrance, though ye once knew this,
how that the Lord, having saved the people out of the land of
Egypt, afterward destroyed them that believed not [[Jude 1:5](#)].

In the wilderness, Israel in unbelief was destroyed, and it is an example that God does judge apostates. When Israel came to Kadesh-barnea, they refused to enter the Promised Land.

Now the spies had brought back a report to Kadesh-barnea that everything God had told them about the land was accurate. But the spies (with the exception of two) didn't believe that God could bring them into the land, and they persuaded the people to believe that. At first they didn't want to believe that it was a good land. After they were convinced it was a good land, they wouldn't believe that God could bring them into the land. They preferred to stay in the wilderness rather than believe God. That is an example of apostasy, a departure from the faith. They departed from the whole basis on which they had left Egypt. God had given them a promise with two parts to it: "I will take you out of Egypt and I will bring you into the land." But Israel's unbelief pushed them back into the

wilderness, and God left them there for thirty-eight more years until all of the adult generation had died -- with the exception of Caleb and Joshua. Israel had used their children as an excuse for not going into the land; so God said, "But your little ones, which ye said should be a prey, them will I bring in, and they shall know the land which ye have despised" ([Num. 14:31](#)).

My friend, in our own lives we sometimes use our children's welfare as an excuse for not serving the Lord. While that sounds very noble, it infers that God isn't thinking of our children. God will take care of them and us when we obey Him.

The new generation of Israel did cross the Jordan River and enter the Promised Land, even as God had promised. However, the generation that had apostatized, that had departed from the faith, were destroyed in the wilderness, and they are the first example that Jude gives.

Angels In Rebellion Kept In Chains (1:6)

[And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day \[Jude 1:6\].](#)

This opens up to us a truth that we don't get with such clarity in any other section of the Word of God, although we are told that there will be a judgment of angels. Sometime in the past they didn't keep "their first estate." God created angels with a free will. Angels do not reproduce as human beings do; therefore, they do not inherit a sinful nature as humans do. Each angel is created by God with a free will. Now, some of these spiritual creatures were caught up in a rebellion, and now they are reserved in chains.

Apparently, the fallen angels are divided into two groups. The group whose rebellion was so great is evidently locked up, incarcerated, and has no freedom of movement any longer. The other group of fallen angels apparently has freedom of movement and is under the leadership of Satan. It seems evident that these are the demons mentioned in Scripture and that are coming into prominence in our day.

For many years the liberal wing of the church has denied the supernatural and denied that there were any such creatures as angels. We are living in a materialistic age, and the viewpoint was that God and the idea of angels were superstitions that we no longer needed. I believe it was Huxley who said that the belief in God was like the fading smile of a Cheshire cat, that it was disappearing in this scientific age.

Back in 1963 Ben Hecht wrote an article under the title, "New God for the Space Age." Let me quote the first few paragraphs:

The most amazing event to enter modern history has been generally snubbed by our chroniclers. It is the petering out of Christianity. Not only are the Bible stories going by the board, but a deeper side of religion seems also to be exiting. This is the mystic concept of the human soul and its survival after death.

Parsons are still preaching away on this topic and congregations are still listening. But congregation and parson both seem to have moved from church to museum.

Fifty years ago religion was an exuberant part of our world. Its sermons, bazaars, tag days, taboos and exhortations filled the press. Its rituals brought a glow to our citizenry. At their supper tables a large part of the voting population bowed its head and said grace.

Religion today is a touchy subject, not because people believe deeply and are ready to defend such belief with emotion, but because they do not want to hear it discussed. They do not know quite what they feel and they do not know what to say about God, His angels and the record of His miracles. Not wanting to sound anti-Christian (or antisocial or anti-anything not under general condemnation) they settle for silence. In this silence, more than in all the previous agnostic hullabaloes, religion seems swiftly disappearing.

Remember that Ben Hecht wrote that in 1963. Since that time there has been a tremendous revival.

For many years liberalism has been predicting the death knell of the church and of all that is supernatural. Around 1963 Gibson Winter, a professor of ethics at the University of Chicago Divinity School, wrote a book entitled *The Suburban Captivity of the Churches* in which he made this statement:

U.S. Protestantism -- once famous for its diversity -- is homogenizing into what is almost a new faith, and if it continues in its present direction, it will be stone-cold dead in a couple of dozen years.

I could give you quotations ad nauseam of what liberals said a few years ago. For instance, a man at the Chicago Theological Seminary made the statement that Protestantism has gotten so prosperous statistically that it has lost all internal discipline whatsoever. "It looks frightfully confining from the outside, but on the inside it has no discipline, no integrity."

These quotations give a picture of the contemporary liberal church.

However, more recently there has been a revival of interest in that which is supernatural. It is quite interesting that the revival did not come from within the church, not even from within the fundamental church. It came on the campuses of the colleges, especially the campuses of some colleges which a few years ago were totally materialistic and denied everything of the supernatural. Today they are talking about demonism, about Satan, and actually about God and the Bible. All of a sudden an interest in the supernatural has appeared again, and angels seem to make sense even in the space age.

Men and women are concerned as they look about at a world of materialism that has gone crazy. We know how to get to the moon, but we do not know how to control human nature here on this earth. A great problem is arising right here in Southern California. A reputable paper has come out with the fact that Los Angeles is becoming an armed city with gangs who roam the streets. They are free to roam the streets while law-abiding people are imprisoned in their homes, afraid to venture out. Los Angeles has become an armed camp.

A few years ago this materialistic generation was saying that human nature was getting better, and since it has been improved, we don't need all of our laws; so the lid was taken off. My friend, we found out that instead of it being a bucket of rosewater, it was a bucket

of stinking garbage! Vile and unspeakable crimes have been committed; unbelievable immorality has taken place. The question is being asked, "Where does all this vileness and evil come from?" As someone has expressed it, "If there were not the Devil, men would have to invent a devil to explain all the evil which is in this world today."

It really is not possible to deny that humanity is depraved. None of us seems to realize fully that we belong to a race that is totally depraved and that we live in a world that is under the control of Satan. It was thought that the removal of laws and restrictions would produce a wonderful, free society. However, the developments of recent years have caused men to return to the supernatural. Unfortunately, the emphasis has been on the evil spirits. Men have found they must believe in the evil spirits to explain the wickedness they find in the world.

Well, the Bible has something to say about it. My friend, the Bible is very much up to date. It is the Bible that tells us about the angels which rebelled against God and about those whom "he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day."

The Word of God has a great deal to say about the judgments that are coming. Folk without a knowledge of the Bible speak of one great judgment day which is coming. Well, the Great White Throne judgment is coming in the future for the unsaved (see [Rev. 20:11-15](#)), but actually there are eight judgments mentioned in the Word of God. One of those eight judgments is the judgment of angels, which will take place during the last days.

In 1 Corinthians we are told the order of the resurrections -- ". . . Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming. Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. [The power is obviously evil power, the demonic forces which are in the world.] For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet" ([1Cor. 15:23-25](#)). So during the Millennium these demonic powers will be judged.

The Scriptures have a great deal to say about the judgment of angels. Let me cite another passage: "Know ye not that we shall judge angels? how much more things that pertain to this life?" ([1Cor. 6:3](#)). This is something that we would not have known if Paul hadn't mentioned it. We will be with our Lord during the Millennium. (We'll probably commute back and forth from earth to the New Jerusalem which is the eternal home of the church.) And at some period, probably during that thousand-year reign of Christ on the earth, there will be the judgment of angels. Although we were created lower than the angels, someday we will have part in their judgment.

Peter gives another reference to the judgment of angels which corresponds to that of Jude: "For if God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell [hades, the place of the unsaved dead], and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment" ([2Pet. 2:4](#)). "Chains of darkness" could not refer to our conception of chains as a series of connected metal links, because angels are spiritual creatures and it would be pretty difficult to put a physical chain on them! The word chains means "bonds," indicating that they are heavily guarded in a certain place. Again I turn to Dr. Wuest's translation:

And angels who did not carefully guard their original position of preeminent dignity, but abandoned once for all their own private dwelling-place, with a view to the judgment of the great day, in everlasting bonds under darkness, He has put under careful guard.

As we have seen, this company of angels is awaiting the judgment which apparently will come during the last days.

The other group of fallen angels are the demons which are abroad in the world today. Demonic power, of course, is a reality, although I personally feel that it is being overplayed at the time I am writing this. There is probably a good percentage of so-called demon activity that is phony, but certainly some of it is impossible to explain as natural phenomena. This is the reason the movie, *The Exorcist*, got under the skin of so many people. Although some of it was fictional, it was based on a factual case. It is an example of the forces of evil that are in the world. It actually took place, and there are other cases like it.

The Book of Revelation has several references to the judgment of fallen angels. "And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever" ([Rev. 20:10](#)). This is a reference to hell, which is the lake of fire. If you want to argue about it being literal fire, that is all right. It is even more literal than fire and worse than fire. Fire is a very weak symbol of how terrible it is going to be. After all, these are spiritual beings which are mentioned here, and fire as we know it would have no effect upon a spiritual being. Also, we learn from this verse that the Devil is not in hell today. A great many folk think he is there now, but instead he is very busy in your town and mine. Also, he has quite an army of helpers, both supernatural and natural -- many folk are helping him, perhaps without realizing it.

Also, the Devil will be responsible for the terrible persecution of believers and especially of Israel during the Great Tribulation of the last days. He will be cast out of heaven: "And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him" ([Rev. 12:9](#)). Satan will be bound during the Kingdom Age: "And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years, and cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled: and after that he must be loosed a little season" ([Rev. 20:1-3](#)). And finally he will be consigned to the lake of fire, which we have seen in [Revelation 20:10](#).

Sodom And Gomorrah Sinned In Sexuality (1:7)

Even as Sodom and Gomorrah, and the cities about them in like manner, giving themselves over to fornication, and going after strange flesh, are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire [[Jude 1:7](#)].

This is Jude's third example of apostasy in the past. He has mentioned Israel in their unbelief, the angels which kept not their first estate, and now the people of Sodom and Gomorrah and the cities about them. These cities were so completely judged that they probably are buried beneath the Dead Sea today. Some people believe that they have located them. I am not sure whether or not this is true, and the exact location is unimportant. The important thing to know is that God destroyed these cities because the people defiled their flesh. They were given over to homosexuality or sodomy.

It is interesting that in the parlance of our day sodomy is called homosexuality, adultery is called free love, the drunkard is a respected alcoholic, and the murderer is temporarily insane. Satan is doing a good job of indoctrinating the world with a new vocabulary. Nevertheless, sodomy in God's sight is gross immorality and the vilest sin of all. The fact that God has judged men in the past for sins of sensuality ought to be a warning to our generation. God will judge any civilization that moves too far in this direction, and I wonder if we haven't done just that.

Modern Apostate Teachers Identified (1:8-10)

Likewise also these filthy dreamers defile the flesh, despise dominion, and speak evil of dignities [[Jude 1:8](#)].

These apostate teachers are the ones that we are to beware of. As Jude puts it back in [Jude 1:4](#), they "crept in unaware"; that is, they came in sideways, they came in the side door, they slipped into the church under false colors. Their credentials and their creeds were not the same. They pretended to be something they were not.

There are four points of identification of apostate teachers that Jude gives to us in this verse:

1. They are "filthy dreamers." You will notice that the word filthy is in italics in the Authorized Version, which indicates that it is not in the better manuscripts, and we can actually leave it out. They are dreamers -- they live in an unreal world, a world that does not exist. My feeling is that the theological liberal has never dealt with reality. Liberalism is rather romantic. It sounds good on paper. It is nice to be able to solve all your problems by positive thinking, but there is a lot of power in negative thinking also. We need today to learn how to say no as well as to say yes. Liberals are dreamers in the sense that they will not face up to reality.

Many years ago I read an editorial in Woman's Home Companion which refers to a group of liberals who have since disappeared from the scene (however, there is a new crop of them abroad in the land today). The editorial reads:

A pledge "to have no part in any war" has been taken by a large body of leading Protestant clergymen in the east. Among them are some of the wisest and most influential ministers we have -- men such as Fosdick, Holmes and Sockman in New York for example. This Covenant of Peace Group declares that war settles no issues, is futile and suicidal and is a denial of God and the teachings of Christ. It asserts that the "chain of evil" which holds us to war can and must be broken now. This is noble doctrine. However much events may lead us to differ with it, when these bold and sincere men stand in their pulpits and preach this rejection of all war, let us remember that these

clergymen by their record have earned the right to their belief. In a great democracy suppression of the clergy in war or in peace can never justly become an instrument of policy, as it has under the dictators.

Such antiwar philosophy was carried over recently into the years of the war in Vietnam. It got us into a great deal of trouble and difficulty. The protest meetings that it inspired in this country actually prolonged the war and led to the killing of a great many more American boys who would not have been killed otherwise. Such thinking is to not realize that we live in a big, bad world and that reality is something you have to rub your nose into. It is something that you simply cannot ignore. Even steel-belted tires have to get down and go over the rough places, and some of them go flat, by the way. These men are dreamers. They are dealing with that which is not real at all. As long as we have a big navy and as long as we have atom bombs, it is nice to sit back in the cloister of the church and to make brave statements like this, but it just doesn't work out.

I have a notion that these men stay out of the ghettos and other such places at night, although they may talk very bravely in the daytime. In a denomination which has boasted of how they want to work among the minority groups, they have closed one of their churches which was located in a minority community. I think they have made a big mistake in doing that.

These men are dreamers, and they have gotten into the church and have used the church of the Lord Jesus Christ. Imagine making the statement that war is a denial of the teachings of Christ! The Lord Jesus made the statement, "When a strong man armed keepeth his palace, his goods are in peace" ([Luke 11:21](#)). The way you are going to protect your own is by being armed. He also said that the king who is going to war is going to sit down and figure it out (see [Luke 14:31](#)). He didn't say it was wrong to figure it out. He said the king had better figure it out, and if he is smart, he will figure out how he is going to carry on that war. May I say to you, these men have failed to face up to what the Lord Jesus Christ really said. He told His disciples, when He first sent them out, that they were to take nothing with them, not even a pocketbook (see [Mark 6:7-9](#)). However, when they had returned and He was sending them out to the ends of the earth, He said, "Be sure and take your pocketbook. And you had better take your American Express and Diner's Club cards and your gasoline credit cards. Also, it might be well to have a sword. You will need it to protect yourselves" (see [Luke 22:35-36](#)). May I say to you, what nonsense this is -- these are dreamers who talk like this. It sounds good to say you don't want to have a part in war. All of us can agree with that. That's sort of like Mother, apple pie, and the American flag -- we all are for it. It's great to have no part in war, but we have to face up to reality also. This is a deceptive message that they bring. It's nice to preach it to a well-heeled crowd on Sunday morning when there is no war and everything seems peaceable.

2. The second thing that Jude says about the apostate teachers is that they "defile the flesh." The thought that Jude has in mind here is that they engage in base and abnormal immorality. This is the same as the "strange flesh" in the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah that he talked about earlier. Many churches today have gone on record that they approve of homosexuality. My friend, God judged the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah. The angels are also a warning to us because they are going to be judged -- they are being held for a

judgment. And God would not let even His own people whom He had brought out of Egypt enter the Promised Land because of their unbelief. All these are examples to us today, and we had better recognize the fact that God will judge our "new morality." It is neither new morality nor new immorality; there is really nothing new about it. It goes back to Sodom and Gomorrah, and it goes back even to the days of Noah.

3. These apostate teachers "despise dominion," which means they reject authority. They are the crowd that wants to get rid of the death penalty. They are the crowd that wants to turn everybody loose to do his thing in his own way. We are seeing what is taking place as a result. Society has broken out today like a cancer in the body politic. We thought we were a civilized people, but we are nothing in the world but a group of savages. And it is because of this matter of despising dominion, of rejecting authority. We want certain laws repealed. For example, we don't want divorce. The argument given is that there is no reason to have divorce laws, that we ought to just let people stop living together. This breaks right across the morality of any nation, my friend, for the home is the bedrock of any society. During the war in Vietnam, it was tragic to see men with their collars buttoned in the back leading in the protest marches. I felt that the collar buttoned in the back was a real token that they were going in the wrong direction.

4. False teachers "speak evil of dignities." This means that they disrespect dignities. They protest against rules and those in authority. In other words, they take it out on the police because they represent authority, or they take it out upon men in high places. The president, the governors, and the mayors are made responsible for anything that happens in the nation or the state or the city, regardless of whether they are responsible or not. Why? Because there has been a loss of respect for authority. Now I will grant you that some men in authority have not been worthy of respect, but the office certainly demands respect. Jude will give us an example of this in the next verse.

Let's notice again the characteristics of these apostates who have come into the church. They came in the side door. They are ungodly. They turn the grace of God into lasciviousness. They deny the Lord Jesus Christ. They are dreamers, they defile the flesh, they despise dominion, and they have disrespect for dignities. These are the things that characterize them, and they are dangerous because of the way they have come into the church.

For ten long and weary years, the Greeks laid siege to the city of Troy, but they did not make a dent in the fortifications. It seemed impregnable, and they could not get an entrance into the city. Then there came forth a suggestion. The suggestion was to build a wooden horse with soldiers concealed inside, to leave it outside the gate, and then to pretend to sail away. So they made the wooden horse, the soldiers were put inside, and it was put by the gate of the city of Troy. Well, curiosity got the best of the Trojans. When they saw the Greeks sailing away, they thought the war was over. They went out, saw the horse, and decided to pull it inside the city. It certainly was a novelty, something to have. That night, the soldiers who were on the inside climbed out, and they were able to unlock the gates of the city from the inside. In the meantime, under cover of darkness, the fleet of Greek ships returned. They had only pretended to sail away. What an entire army of mighty men could not do from the outside in ten years, a few soldiers did from the inside. In the same way, the church has been harmed today from the inside and has been taken

over by liberalism. Actually, the church has never been harmed from the outside. Persecution caused it to grow by leaps and bounds. Today we are witnessing the destruction of the church from the inside -- it's an inside job. Christ was betrayed from the inside, not from the outside. One of His own betrayed Him over to His nation; His nation betrayed Him over to the Romans, and the Romans brought Him to the Cross. The church is being betrayed today by the ones who have gotten in by the side door.

The apostasy that was a little cloud the size of a man's hand is now a raging storm that is lashing across the church, casting up foam and fury. We need to hang out this epistle as a storm warning because the apostasy is here in our midst today. I do not say this with any joy or bitterness, but I make it as a statement of fact. All the great denominations of the past are largely gone; that is, they have departed from the faith, probably never to return. They've gone into never-never land. As far as I know, there is no record of a church or any organization or an institution, having once departed from the faith, ever returning. I am told there have been some individuals who have, but I do not know any of them.

The Wesley movement which began in England, for example, was a come-out movement. It was begun when the church became cold and indifferent in that day, and the church of Wesley became a warm incubator in which to reproduce life. But I am sorry to say that today in many places it is a deep freeze that preserves the outward form of Wesley but does not have the warmth and the life that was once there.

I must be very frank to say that I do not think that fundamentalism as it is today is the answer. I perceive a real weakness which I think will ultimately undermine even fundamentalism. That weakness is this: fundamentalism has been exact and precise in doctrine, but in many places it has been devoid of ethics and morals. There are no high principles and practices. There has been a moral breakdown outside of contemporary society, and, fortunately, it is mirrored in our conservative churches. I was with a group sometime ago which is a fine group, but they are an illustration of what I mean. They are insistent and even belligerent about doctrine and about separation. But when it was called to their attention that one in their midst was guilty of immorality, they actually defended him! The ethical practices of another individual smelled to high heaven although he called himself a fundamentalist. May I say to you, this group took a ho-hum attitude. This hurts the cause of Christ a great deal because it comes from the inside.

We are living in days of apostasy. It may be that there are some who would say to me, "Preacher, you are really being sensational. Aren't you exaggerating just a little bit?" I don't think I am, my friend; in fact, I am not sure but what I am giving this in low key to you. I would like to pass on to you the results of a study that was made and some statements made by liberal preachers some years ago now. The situation today is even more alarming than this:

Out of a poll of 700 preachers, the following results were given: 48% denied the complete inspiration of the Bible; 24% rejected the atonement; 12% rejected the resurrection of the body; 27% did not believe that Christ will return to judge the quick and the dead. A Washington, D.C., minister said, "We liberal clergymen are no longer interested in the fundamentalist-modernist controversy. We do not believe we should even waste our time engaging in it. So far as we are concerned, it makes no difference

whether Christ was born of a virgin or not. We don't even bother to form an opinion on the subject." An Arlington, Va., minister said, "We have closed our minds to such trivial consideration as the question of the resurrection of Christ. If you fundamentalists wish to believe that nonsense we have no objection, but we have more important things to preach than the presence or absence of an empty tomb 20 centuries ago." A leading minister in Washington, D.C., said flatly, "In our denomination what you call the 'faith of our Fathers' is approaching total extinction. Of course a few of the older ministers still cling to the Bible. But among the younger men, the real leaders of our denomination today, I do not know of a single one who believes in Christ, or any of the things that you classify as fundamentals."

My friend, have I exaggerated? Have I overstated the case of whether we are in the apostasy or not?

Yet Michael the archangel, when contending with the devil he disputed about the body of Moses, durst not bring against him a railing accusation, but said, The Lord rebuke thee [[Jude 1:9](#)].

This is a most remarkable verse of Scripture. Here is Wuest's very fine translation of it: "Yet Michael, the archangel, when disputing with the devil, arguing concerning the body of Moses, dared not bring a sentence that would impugn his dignity, but said, May the Lord rebuke you."

Satan is a fallen creature and an avowed enemy of God, yet Michael, when contending about the body of Moses, would not bring a sentence that would impugn the dignity of Satan. Michael even respected the position of Satan. Clement, one of the early church fathers, quotes from an apocryphal writing dealing with the funeral of Moses. When Michael was commissioned to bury Moses, Satan opposed it on the grounds that, since he was the master of the material and matter, the body belonged to him. Michael's only answer was, "The Lord [that is, the Creator] rebuke thee." Satan also brought the charge of murder against Moses. Also it is suggested that Satan wanted to hinder the later appearance of Moses at the Mount of Transfiguration.

Lucifer was a creation of God and apparently the highest creature that God created. And then evil was found in him. Don't think that evil means that he went out and stole something. The evil that was in him was that he put his will against the will of God. He was lifted up by pride, and he wanted to become independent of God. He actually thought he could dethrone God -- at least from part of His universe. As far as this world is concerned, God has permitted him to carry on this rebellion, and God has a high and holy purpose in it. But this creature still believes he will be able to take a segment of God's created universe and be the ruler over it. I'm sure that Satan wants this earth as his.

"Yet Michael . . . durst not bring against him a railing accusation, but said, The Lord rebuke thee." Michael didn't curse Satan. He didn't call him a long list of names. I'm sure that many of us would have been perfectly willing to have done that. We really would have read the riot act to him, but Michael didn't. Do you know why? Michael is an archangel, and all he did was to say, "The Lord rebuke you." He didn't go into a long tirade of epithets or of condemnation, although he could have. Why? Michael had respect unto his office, his position -- Lucifer had been created the highest creature.

This is a lesson that you and I need to learn. A great many believers have not learned to bow even to God. My friend, you and I are creatures; He is the Creator. What right have you and I to question anything that He does? Don't misunderstand me. If you think that I piously accept everything that comes my way, you are wrong. I talk back to Him many times, and I want to know why He lets certain things happen to me. Maybe you do that also. But we need to recognize that God is the Creator; He is also our Redeemer. He is the One who loves us. But our God is high, holy, and lifted up. He is a just and righteous God. He never makes any mistakes. He never does anything wrong. Everything He does is right and, therefore, you and I can trust Him. But do we do that? Do we respect His authority? Do we respect His person? In that day when men must give an account, the Lord Jesus Christ is going to say, "You said, 'Lord, Lord,' but you didn't do the things I commanded. Each one went his own way and did that which was right in his own eyes." This is the picture of mankind. How about you? How about me today? What a lesson Michael the archangel is to us!

But these speak evil of those things which they know not: but what they know naturally, as brute beasts, in those things they corrupt themselves [[Jude 1:10](#)].

I would like, as best I can, to make this verse understandable to you because it is another very important verse in this epistle. When Jude says, "But these speak evil," the Greek word is blasphemeo which by transliteration is our English word blaspheme. The apostates actually blaspheme.

"These speak evil of [blaspheme] those things which they know not: but what they know naturally." Jude uses two different words here which are both translated "know." May I say, without recognizing that, it is difficult to determine exactly what Jude means here. The first "know" is eido which speaks of "mental comprehension and knowledge . . . referring to the whole range of invisible things," as Vincent defines it. Knowledge is not confined to what you can pour into a test tube or look at under a microscope, although a great many people think that it is. The finer things of life are things you cannot put under the microscope; you cannot pour them into a test tube. For example, what about a wonderful piece of music? What happens if you try to stick it down a test tube or look at it under a microscope? Music needs to be translated into sound, and the ear needs to hear it -- you cannot see it at all; it is actually invisible. Love is also invisible -- you couldn't put love under the microscope. How about faith? -- you can't put it under the microscope. My friend, there are a great many things I know, and I know them without any proof from the laboratory. I know them because I have experienced them. The Holy Spirit has made them real to my own heart. "But these speak evil of those things which they know not." That Washington, D.C., preacher thought he was very brilliant to say that he no longer believed in the Resurrection. May I say to you, there are many things he doesn't know.

The second word for "know" which Jude uses here is epistamai, which means "to understand." Vincent says that it was used "originally of skill in handicraft" and that it "refers to palpable things; objects of sense; the circumstances of sensual enjoyment." These are things you can pour into the test tube. All that these folk know is what they can handle and what they can see. They are like brute beasts because, after all, a brute only

knows about the hay or the grass or the corn or another animal that it can eat. This refers to that which they know by instinct. For example, in the fall of the year, the ducks are in Canada, having had a nice summer up there, but all of a sudden they take off. Somebody says, "Boy, are they smart! Those ducks know that before long it will be winter, that snow will be on the ground, and that the lake is going to freeze over. So they take off for the south, and they go all the way down to Mexico and into Central America. They are really very smart!" No, they are not. They move just like a beast, just like a bird moves -- by instinct. There is no comprehension, no understanding.

This generation that thinks it is so smart because it only believes what it can pour into a test tube is a poor generation. They do not understand anything that a brute beast couldn't understand. They have not reached the higher plane of knowledge, what Paul called epignosis. Paul says, "You can know that the Bible is the Word of God. You can know that Jesus is the Savior of the world." These men, knowing just physical things, think they know everything that can be known, and they corrupt themselves in these things. This is the picture of the apostates that Jude gives to us.

Cain, Balaam, And Korah -- Examples Of Apostates (1:11)

Woe unto them! for they have gone in the way of Cain, and ran greedily after the error of Balaam for reward, and perished in the gainsaying of Core [[Jude 1:11](#)].

Jude has already given three examples of apostate groups: the children of Israel, the angels who rebelled, and the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah. Now we are given another three by way of illustration, and these three are individuals.

"Woe unto them!" The word for "woe" is the Greek word ouai. The very pronunciation of this word is a wail -- "Ouai, ouai!" It denotes a wail of grief or of denunciation. Here it is more a wail of denunciation, but it is both. Of these apostates whom Jude has just identified, he now says, "Woe unto them!"

"For they have gone in the way of Cain." Cain was a religious man but a natural man. He believed in God and believed in religion, but he did it after his own will. He denied that he was a sinner, rejected redemption by blood, and thought that he could come his own way to God. [Hebrews 11:4](#) certainly tells the story: "By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts: and by it he being dead yet speaketh." Cain is dead also, yet he speaks. The way of Cain is the way of a man who refused to bring a little lamb which pointed to Christ. In other words, Cain did not come to God by faith. He did not believe God when He said that man was to bring a little lamb for a sacrifice, that without shedding of blood there is no forgiveness of sins, and that the penalty must be paid. Cain thought that he could come to God his own way, and that is the picture of the apostate today. The apostate calls himself a liberal and a modernist; but, my friend, this is as old as the Garden of Eden. Right outside the Garden of Eden, Cain was a modernist and a liberal. He believed in religion and God, but he did it his own way, not God's way.

"And ran greedily after the error of Balaam for reward." Here we have the error of Balaam; in [2Peter 2:15](#) it is the way of Balaam; and in [Revelation 2:14](#) it is the doctrine of Balaam.

In 2 Peter we see the thing that was the undermining of the man; that is, Balaam was guilty of covetousness which is idolatry. He was a hired preacher. He wanted to make a buck with the gift he had, a gift that was apparently God-given. This was the way of Balaam, and it was his undoing. A man can seek for something other than money, however. He can seek for prominence, for popularity, for fame, for applause, or for position. There are many different things which would put a man in the way of Balaam. Jude says that this marks the apostate.

In the Book of Revelation, you have the doctrine of Balaam. [Numbers 22](#) -- [Numbers 25](#) tells us that this man could not bring a curse against the nation Israel, and so he told Balak that by sending the Moabite women into the camp of Israel, he would be able to bring fornication and idolatry into their homes through mixed marriages. You can be sure of one thing: from Genesis to Revelation, God warns against the intermarriage of believers and unbelievers. You cannot condone such marriages on any basis whatsoever. It is unfortunate that too many young people are not warned of this because it has resulted in a great deal of unhappiness.

The error of Balaam here in Jude is that he thought God would have to punish Israel for their sins. He did not recognize that there is a morality that is above natural morality. He thought that a righteous God had to curse Israel. He was totally unaware of the morality of the Cross. It is taught in the Old Testament that God can maintain and does enforce His authority, but He can be just and the justifier of a believing sinner. Balaam did not understand that God would forgive the nation Israel when they turned to Him. It is sometimes difficult for someone to understand how a man can be converted. When I worked in a bank, was led to Christ, and wanted to study for the ministry, my fellow workers, most of whom were church members, could not understand how I could study for the ministry. And they had ample reason to wonder about that, by the way. They couldn't understand that God had forgiven me and that I had a new life now. They just didn't believe that. They didn't believe it because they couldn't understand it. This is the same problem that Balaam had.

"And perished in the gainsaying of Core [Korah]." You will perhaps recall that Korah led a rebellion against Moses (see [Num. 16](#)). He came to the conclusion that Moses was not the only one around who had access to God. Korah rebelled against God's constituted authority, who was Moses. He wanted to intrude into that which was sacred. In effect he asked, "Has God only spoken to Moses? Who does Moses think he is?" Actually, Moses didn't think too much of himself or that he had any undue qualifications; in fact, Moses wanted to disqualify himself as the leader of the people out of Egypt. But God had called Moses, and this man Korah rebelled against him. He contradicted the authority of Moses; he intruded into the office of the priests, and he died. In other words, he was a rebellious man, rebelling against God. Jude says that such rebellion characterizes the apostate.

Notice that the things which are true of these three individuals from the Old Testament are also the things which are true of apostates. Cain did not believe that you need to come to God by faith and that you need a bloody sacrifice because man is a sinner. He believed that if you have a religion, that is all you need. The apostate goes along with that. The error of Balaam is to think that a holy God must punish sin and that sinners cannot be

forgiven. The apostate makes the same mistake. He says, "How in the world can the sacrifice of Christ save anyone? A man has to do this for himself." And the apostate rebels against God as Korah did. They assume an authority that is not theirs. They stand in the pulpit and give out politics instead of giving out the Word of God. Instead of telling what God says, they tell people what they say and what they think. A man said to me some time ago, "I have dropped out of my church. I am tired of listening to a preacher who gives political economics and attempts to stand in the position of being an authority on government. He assumes that he has all knowledge, and he never uses the Word of God. He never tells what God says or what God thinks, and I'm tired of listening to him." I know nothing about that man's church, but I assume that that preacher is an apostate because he has the mark of the apostate. These three men from the Old Testament illustrate this to us today.

Modern Apostate Teachers Described (1:12-16)

In the next few verses the modern apostate teachers are defined and described. You will not find anywhere language more vivid, more graphic, more dramatic, more frightening than the description of the apostate in the last days.

These are spots in your feasts of charity, when they feast with you,
feeding themselves without fear: clouds they are without water,
carried about of winds; trees whose fruit withereth, without fruit,
twice dead, plucked up by the roots [[Jude 1:12](#)].

Again let me share with you Dr. Wuest's translation, which makes the description of the apostate teachers even more vivid:

These are the hidden rocks in your love feasts, sumptuously feasting with you without fear, as shepherds leading themselves to pasture, waterless clouds carried past by winds, autumn trees without fruit, having died twice, rooted up.

What a picture we have here!

"These are spots in your feasts of charity." The word spots is better translated "hidden rocks" by Dr. Wuest. The picture is of hidden rocks which wreck a ship. They make what Paul calls "shipwreck" of the faith, and Paul names two men who evidently ran into an apostate, a hidden rock, and made shipwreck of the faith (see [1Tim. 1:19-20](#)). An apostate may be compared to the tip of an iceberg. Very little of it is visible, but if a ship runs into it, the ship will go to the bottom of the sea. Oh, how many people there are, especially young people, whose faith has not only been shaken but wrecked by a person who is an apostate!

"These are spots in your feasts of charity." The "feasts of charity" were love feasts which were held in the early church before the communion service. It was a time of fellowship when believers brought food and shared a meal together. The poor could bring very little, but it was a time of sharing what they had. Well, the apostates came in with ravenous appetites. They could eat more than anyone else -- "feeding themselves without fear." They were shepherds who were feeding themselves instead of their flock. Not only in the matter of food but also in their failure to teach the Word of God to their flock, it was evident that they were concerned only about themselves.

Milton describes this kind of situation when he writes of his friend, Lycidas. In his poem, he expresses his grief for the young man who had been a great preacher and expositor of the Word but was drowned in the Irish Channel. Milton describes the situation in England as it prevailed in his day: "The hungry sheep look up and are not fed." What a picture of an apostate in the pulpit!

"Clouds they are without water." They may look as if they are filled with the Word of God, but they are empty and dry. They may wear robes and speak in pompous, pontifical voices with great authority. They have had courses in public speaking and homiletics, and they know how to spiritualize a text of Scripture and make it mean something entirely different from what God intended. They are like beautiful clouds that drift across the sky without giving any refreshment to the earth.

In my boyhood days I can remember chopping cotton in the summertime and watching the clouds pass over. Oh, how I prayed for rain so I could quit chopping cotton, but there was no rain in those clouds. They were nothing but snowy white puffs. There was no water in them at all. Well, that is Jude's picture of apostates. They do not have the water of life. They actually know nothing about the Word of God.

"Trees whose fruit withereth, without fruit, twice dead, plucked up by the roots." When the Lord Jesus gave the warning against false teachers, He said, ". . . by their fruits ye shall know them" ([Matt. 7:20](#)). Jude says that the apostate has withered fruit, he is "twice dead, plucked up by the roots." It was Dwight L. Moody who said that when a man is born once, he will have to die twice and that when a man is born twice, he will have to die only once. Well, Jude says that the apostates are spiritually dead, dead in trespasses and sins -- and yet trying to lead others! Also the apostate's body will have to die; so he is twice dead. What a picture of the apostate -- and Jude is not through with him.

[Raging waves of the sea, foaming out their own shame; wandering stars, to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness for ever \[Jude 1:13\].](#)

In the previous verse he said they were like clouds carried about by the wind. These men generally speak on current events every Sunday. They pick up something out of the newspaper or something they have seen on television, and that becomes their subject for the coming Lord's Day. They do not really give the interpretation of the Word of God which would be applicable for the day.

Now here Jude says that they are "raging waves of the sea." They just stand in the pulpit and rant. Dr. Thayer says that these false teachers are "impelled by their restless passions. They unblushingly exhibit in word and deed, their base and abandoned spirit."

"Wandering stars." Wandering stars just wander through space. They are lawless in that they follow no course whatsoever.

"To whom is reserved the blackness of darkness for ever." This refers to hell. One symbol of hell is fire, and the other is blackness of darkness. The great emphasis has been placed upon the symbol of fire. Hell is literal, of course, but to say it is literal fire isn't quite adequate for this reason: there will be spiritual creatures there as well as man -- and

the worst sins of man are spiritual sins such as unbelief. Therefore, physical punishment wouldn't be quite adequate. My feeling is that man will wish it were literal fire because it will be so much worse than fire. The other symbol, "blackness of darkness," is to me far more frightening. And I believe that a lost man carries his darkness with him -- not only physical darkness but spiritual darkness. John Milton, who had an insight into many spiritual truths, penned these lines:

He that has light within his own clear breast,
May sit in the centre, and enjoy bright day;
But he that hides a dark soul, and foul thoughts
Benighted walks under the midday sun;
Himself is his own dungeon.

That is tremendous! My feeling is that the horrors of hell will be increased by those who go there. For instance, there is a place on earth called Hell's Kitchen. Is the difference in the kind of real estate that is there? No, the difference is in the people who are there. This, together with the concept of physical darkness, is to me frightful beyond words. If you have ever been down in Carlsbad Caverns when the lights are turned out, you know what real darkness is. I'd hate to be down there forever, my friend!

We come now to another remarkable passage of Scripture, and the only place it occurs in the Word of God is here in Jude.

And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these,
saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints,
To execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly
among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly
committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners
have spoken against him [[Jude 1:14-15](#)].

This prophecy of Enoch is not found in the Old Testament. In [Genesis 5](#) we have the record of Enoch, but we are told nothing about his prophecy. Enoch is not a common name; so we may be sure that the man Jude mentions is Enoch of the antediluvian period, the man who walked with God and God took him.

Now let me quote what Dr. Wuest has written about this Book of Enoch:

The quotation is from the apocryphal Book of Enoch. This book, known to the Church Fathers of the second century, lost for some centuries with the exception of a few fragments, was found in its entirety in a copy of the Ethiopic Bible in 1773 by Bruce. It consists of revelations purporting to have been given to Enoch and Noah. Its object is to vindicate the ways of divine providence, to set forth the retribution reserved for sinners, and so show that the world is under the immediate government of God.

Enoch prophesied regarding the false teachers of the last days, and that is a remarkable thing! God apparently did not want the Book of Enoch in the canon of Scripture or it would be there -- you may be sure of that. Godly men recognized that it was an apocryphal book, but here is one prophecy that God wanted put into His Holy Word. It is a prophecy concerning the coming of Christ with His saints.

We know from the record in Genesis that Enoch was translated, that is, he was removed from the earth without dying. And sometime in the future, the church, meaning true believers, is to be removed from the earth without dying. Of course, through the centuries since the time of Christ, believers have been dying so that at the present time most of the church has already passed through the doorway of death. And at the time of the Rapture they are to be caught up together with the living believers to meet the Lord in the air. This teaching is not in the Old Testament at all, yet Enoch is a type or a representative of the believers who will take part in the Rapture. Enoch was removed from the earthly scene before the judgment of the Flood came upon the earth. And the believers who compose the true church will be removed from this earth, will be caught up to meet the Lord in the air, before the judgment of the Great Tribulation breaks upon the earth.

Now, after the Great Tribulation, the Lord Jesus will return to the earth. However, at the time of the Rapture He does not come to the earth, but the believers are caught up to meet Him in the air. When we say that the Rapture is the second coming of Christ, we are not quite accurate if we mean that Christ is coming to earth at that time. No, the Rapture is the removal of the church. Then the visible church which is left on the earth, composed of folk who are not true believers, will totally depart from the faith and will enter the Great Tribulation period. And at the end of the Tribulation, the Lord Jesus will actually come to the earth "to execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed," as Jude has prophesied. This is a remarkable passage of Scripture.

Now notice the penetrating truth brought out in Dr. Wuest's translation of [Jude 1:14-15](#):

And there prophesied also with respect to these, the seventh from Adam, Enoch, saying, Behold, there comes the Lord with His holy myriads, to execute judgment against all and to convict all those who are destitute of a reverential awe towards God, concerning all their works of impiety which they impiously performed and concerning all the harsh things which impious sinners spoke against Him.

It is quite interesting that "holy myriads," which has to do with the numbers of the saints, can be supernatural or natural creatures, which probably means that the church will come back with Christ when He returns to the earth. If the church does come back with Him to reign on the earth, obviously it had to leave the earth sometime before. You simply have to believe in the Rapture if you believe that Christ is coming back to earth with His saints.

"To execute judgment upon all." When Christ returns to the earth, He is going to execute judgment. Jesus Himself said this in His Olivet Discourse. It is mentioned again and again in the Word of God, and we have seen it in the Old Testament.

"To convince all that are ungodly among them" or, as Dr. Wuest has translated it, "to convict all those who are destitute of a reverential awe towards God." They are ungodly in the sense that they leave God out. And that is something that is quite popular today.

"Of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed." Dr. Wuest translates it: "... concerning all their works of impiety which they impiously performed." Their works are actually anti-God.

"And of all their hard speeches [harsh things] which ungodly sinners have spoken against him."

Now this prophecy of Enoch, and it is a great prophecy, deals with the judgment upon the organized church which will be in total apostasy after the Rapture. You see, the Rapture will rupture the church -- the true believers will leave the earth, and the make-believers will remain and will be here when Christ comes to judge men in that day.

These are murmurers, complainers, walking after their own lusts;
and their mouth speaketh great swelling words, having men's
persons in admiration because of advantage [[Jude 1:16](#)].

Here are five additional identifications of apostates. (1) They are murmurers. Murmuring means to mutter complaints. This is not loud, outspoken dissatisfaction but muttering against God in an undertone. (2) They are complainers, complaining about their lot in life, discontented, never satisfied. If they recognize God at all, they blame Him for everything that has happened to them. I have received hundreds of letters from folk who tell me how discontented, dissatisfied, and unhappy they were with their lot. Then when they came to Christ, all of that changed. And another characteristic of apostates is that (3) they walk after their own lusts or desires. Those desires could be good or bad -- not necessarily desires which are base like immorality. It could be anything that leaves God out. It could be a sailing boat, good music, or literature, or even religion in which they find a certain amount of satisfaction, but in their hearts they are discontented. (4) Their mouth speaks great swelling words; that is, they are immoderate and arrogant; they use extravagant language, which is fizz and foam but has no content. I was rather amused by listening to a politician being interviewed. He used a great many modern expressions which are being overworked today. When he had finished, I analyzed what he had said and realized that he hadn't said anything -- he had been just talking. He had not committed himself to anything whatsoever. Well, there are a great many men in the ministry who talk like that also. (5) They have men's persons in admiration because of advantage. This is literally "admiring countenances." They are great at applauding others -- and they say a lot of things which are not true -- because they are looking to men for their promotion, their advantage. You may recall that the Epistle of James has something to say about this: "My brethren, have not the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory, with respect of persons. For if there come unto your assembly a man with a gold ring, in goodly apparel, and there come in also a poor man in vile raiment; and ye have respect to him that weareth the gay clothing, and say unto him, Sit thou here in a good place; and say to the poor, Stand thou there, or sit here under my footstool: are ye not then partial in yourselves, and are become judges of evil thoughts?" ([James 2:1-4](#)).

We see this kind of thing going on in our churches all the time. I went into a church some time ago where I was to preach. The folk didn't know me very well -- certainly the ushers did not. Since I arrived early, I thought I would just go in without identifying myself. When I entered the sanctuary, two ushers were busy talking to each other and paid no attention to me; so I just waited.

Finally one of them said, "Want a bulletin?"

"Yes, thank you."

"Where do you want to sit?"

"Well, I don't know. Where would you want to seat me?"

"How about taking that seat right there." He wasn't about to take me down to the front section although there were plenty of seats available. He was not in a friendly mood at all. So, instead of sitting down, I just walked on back. Later when I came out on the platform, I looked back at that usher. Believe me, he was white. After the service he came to me very apologetically. He said, "I didn't know you were going to be our speaker today. I didn't realize that you were Dr. McGee."

"Well," I said, "it really wasn't very important for you to recognize me because, very frankly, I was going to preach here today regardless of whether the ushers let me in or not. But I really think it is important that you usher strangers and visitors to a seat and be very friendly with them."

My friend, as believers we certainly should not have "men's persons in admiration because of advantage." Yet I notice this attitude both in churches and in certain Christian schools. One school will give a man from another school an honorary doctor's degree -- something he didn't work for. Then that brother will arrange to have his school confer a doctor's degree on the brother who gave him his degree.

Also, this same type of thing is sometimes practiced by preachers. We speak in a certain church, and the pastor introduces us as some great person, which we certainly are not. Then when he comes over to our church to speak, we introduce him as some great person -- whether he is or not. Frankly, we should not use that method because it is less than honest. And that is the method of apostates. They do not look to God. They are not concerned whether or not the Lord Jesus will say to them, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant." They are more concerned to have the applause of the crowd.

When I was in a certain conference, a very timid preacher came to me with a question.

He asked, "Do you preach in your church the way you are speaking here?"

"Certainly. Why not?"

"Well, if I preached that way in my church, I am confident that I would have to resign."

I said to him very frankly, "I certainly feel sorry for you, and I think that your church is in a bad way. The message you heard me give was given in my church before I came here -- I practiced on them!"

Having men's persons in admiration because of some advantage they will get from it, looking to men for promotion instead of looking to God for promotion, is certainly a condemnation and the mark of an apostate.

Occupation Of Believers In Days Of Apostasy (1:12-16)

In [verses 17-19](#), believers are warned by the apostles that these apostates would come. Then in [verses 20-25](#), we will see what believers must do in these days of apostasy.

Believers Warned That Apostates Would Come (1:17-19)

Jude reminds believers that the apostles warned that these apostates would come. In other words, he is saying that this ought not to disturb us. The apostasy is something God has permitted, and He has permitted it for a purpose.

But, beloved, remember ye the words which were spoken before of the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ [[Jude 1:17](#)].

Jude is turning away from describing the apostates, and he says, "But, beloved." He is turning the page as it were, and now he is talking to the beloved. The beloved are not those beloved of Jude. (However, I do think Jude loved them because he would not have written such a strong epistle if he had not loved them and desired to tell them the truth.) The word he uses here means that they are beloved of God. These are the ones who are experiencing the love of God in their lives, and for that reason they are called "beloved."

"Remember ye the words which were spoken before of the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ." All the way through the Word of God, you will find that we are told to remember. In other words, we are to remember the Word of God. You and I should know the Word of God so that our memories can call it up when we need to have these great truths brought to our attention.

"But, beloved, remember ye the words which were spoken before of the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ." This is evidence that Jude was not the apostle by that name. He is, as we have indicated, Jude, the half-brother of the Lord Jesus. In spite of his blood relationship to Jesus, he takes a very humble attitude. He will use the apostles to corroborate what he is going to say, as he has done before in this epistle. He said earlier, "What I am going to write to you about the apostasy is not new with me. I'm not the only one who has written on it. Others have written of it beforehand." Now he says here, "You are to remember the words that were spoken to you by the apostles of the Lord Jesus Christ." We will see before we finish this epistle that it is all-essential to know what the Word of God has to say. I do not believe that you can stand for God in this world without tripping up unless you have a knowledge of the Word of God -- it is essential. I have seen individual after individual, both men and women, trip up and fall in their Christian walk. I can attribute every such instance that I know of to a lack of knowledge of the Word of God. How important it is for us to know what the Word of God has to say.

We come now to a very important passage of Scripture where I feel that I need a special anointing of the Holy Spirit as I write because it deals with a distinction that is not always made today.

How that they told you there should be mockers in the last time, who should walk after their own ungodly lusts.

These be they who separate themselves, sensual, having not the Spirit [[Jude 1:18-19](#)].

I will begin by giving you Dr. Wuest's translation of [verses 17-19](#):

But, as for you, divinely-loved ones, remember the words which were spoken previously by the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ, that they were saying to you, In the last time there shall be mockers ordering their course of conduct in accordance with their own passionate cravings which are destitute of reverential awe towards God. These are those who cause divisions, egocentric, not holding the spirit.

In [Jude 1:17-18](#), Jude says in effect, "Remember what the apostles said to you. They told you that there would come mockers in the last time and that they would walk after their own ungodly lusts." That is, the desires of the apostates are totally apart from God and from the will of God.

In [Jude 1:19](#) Jude defines the apostates: "These be they who separate themselves, sensual, having not the Spirit." He has given us so many descriptions of the apostate that there is no reason for us to miss him at all. I believe that you can test an unregenerate person, even an unregenerate minister, by the Word of God. I like to say that I use the Word of God as a Geiger counter. When I give out the Word of God, the Geiger counter registers, and I get a response from the folk who have heard it. Many tell us how the Word of God has actually revolutionized their lives and their homes. It has made everything different, even for those who are believers. But there is another group of people who think that I am a loony bird, that I'm way out in left field, and that teaching the Word of God is a very foolish sort of thing. So you can see that the Geiger counter of the Word of God works, and by it you can test the unregenerate person.

"These be they who separate themselves." First of all, Jude says that the apostates cause divisions in the church. Vincent says that Jude is speaking of those who "cause divisions in the church. . . . Of those who draw a line through the church and set off one part from another." Liberalism was responsible for splitting the great denominations of the church. The liberals took over the church and then said that the fundamentalists were the ones dividing it. Of course, it was not the fundamentalists who divided the church. They were the ones who were holding to the great doctrines upon which the denominations were founded. The original creeds of all the denominations are sound creeds. Although they differ a little at some points, there are no differences at all on the great basics.

The liberals were first called modernists because they wanted to change things. They never liked that name, but they like the name of liberal today. However, the liberal, instead of being broad-minded, whether he is in theology or politics, is to my judgment the most narrow-minded person in the world. Frankly, he is a dangerous man to deal with, because he will deal with you in a vitriolic manner, with bitterness and hatred, and he will not mind hurting you.

"Sensual" -- the word is *psuchikos* from which we get our English word psychology. It means a life that centers about the individual; that is, the "I." It is an egotistical way of living in which the individual becomes all important: "I come first." It is selfish; it is natural. It is the life of the unrenewed man, the man who is not born again.

This is Alford's statement:

The psuche [that is, the soul] is the centre of the personal being, the "I" of each individual. It is in each man bound to the spirit, man's higher part, and to the body, man's lower part; drawn upwards by the one, downward by the other. He who gives himself up to the lower appetites, is sarkikos (fleshly): he who by communion of his pneuma (spirit) with God's Spirit is employed in the higher aims of his being, is pneumatikos (spiritual). He who rests midway, thinking only of self and self's interests, whether animal or intellectual, is the psuchikos (sensual), the selfish man, the man in whom the spirit is sunk and degraded into subordination to the subordinate psuche (soul).

The natural man, the sensual man, is a selfish man who lives like an animal. He wants to get all he can. He wants to eat all he can. He wants to get all the money and favor he can. He lives entirely for himself. All this has to do with a man in his natural makeup today.

"Having not the Spirit." The apostates do not have the Holy Spirit of God; they are not indwelt by the Spirit of God. You will remember that when Paul got to Ephesus, this was the question he directed to those people who were passing as believers but who were not believers. They had heard only of the baptism of John, and Paul asked them, "Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you first believed?" They knew nothing about it. They had heard about the ministry of John but had not been taught about the Lord Jesus' death and resurrection. When Paul explained these things to them, they accepted Christ and received the Holy Spirit (see [Acts 19:1-7](#)).

We need to understand that man is a tripartite being; that is, he has a threefold nature. In [1Thessalonians 5:23](#) we read: "And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." Man has a body, a soul, and a spirit.

If you read very carefully the account of the creation of man in the Book of Genesis, you will find that physically, man was taken from the ground. There are about fifteen elements in the dirt which are made into our bodies. When we get through with our bodies, at the time of death, we will be moving out of them, and these bodies will return back to the earth. At the resurrection of the believer, the body will be raised a spiritual body. It is sown in corruption, and it is going to be raised in incorruption.

What happened to this physical man that God created? He was given what we would call a soul -- but that word is often misunderstood. He was given the psychological part of himself; that is, that part which directs him in his approach to the physical universe. He gets hungry; so he goes and eats. He desires entertainment, and he provides that for himself. He may be a very generous individual, very amiable, very attractive, and he may have what we call charisma. Many unsaved people are like that. They are likable folk, and I sometimes wish that all believers were as gracious as some unsaved people whom I meet. Although unsaved folk can be very attractive on the surface, they are very different underneath, of course. This is man's psychological nature.

But God also breathed into man's breathing places the breath of life, or the wind, the pneuma, the spirit. This is man's human spirit, and it is above the psychological. It is that which looks to God, that which longs for God, that which wants to worship.

Man, therefore, has a tripartite nature. He is a trinity: the body or the physical side, the soul or the psychological side, and the spirit or the pneumatic side. The psychological side is what Jude calls "sensual" here in [Jude 1:19](#).

Now what really happened at the fall of man? I like to think of man in his tripartite nature as a house with three floors. On the first floor is the dining room and the kitchen -- that is the physical. On the second floor is the library and the music room -- that is the psychological. On the top floor is a chapel, a place to worship -- that is the spiritual. On the top floor is also the Word of God, because man will not understand it without the Spirit of God leading him; the natural man would not even want it. The spiritual was on the top floor, but at the Fall, man actually died spiritually, and the house turned upside down. The physical side got up on top. Man today in his natural state is primarily physical. Meat and potatoes are top priority. Self-preservation is the first law of life. Man is like the animal world in that he is physical, but man is also psychological. He is self-conscious. He enjoys music. He loves beauty. And he also indulges in immorality. This is the area, the sensual part of man, that Jude refers to here. At the Fall, therefore, the spiritual part of man died. Man no longer had a capacity for God; in fact, he was now an enemy of God.

However, when you and I came to Christ and trusted Him as Savior, we were given a new nature, and that new nature can now respond to the Holy Spirit of God. But we still have that old nature. We are still fleshly, and we can live in the flesh. Paul had a great deal to say about this in the eighth chapter of Romans. He writes in [Jude 1:5](#): "For they that are after the flesh [this is the natural man, the apostate] do mind the things of the flesh [that is all they are interested in]; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit [these folk seek to please God]." Paul goes on in [Jude 1:6](#) to say, "For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace." When you live in the lower nature -- the psychological, the sensual -- you are dead to God and have no fellowship with Him. That fellowship is broken. John says, "If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth" ([1John 1:6](#)). But he who lives in the Spirit and attempts to please God is truly living it up. The spirit of such a man, instead of going downward and doing the things the flesh wants to do, does the things God wants done. Now Paul says in [Romans 8:7](#), "Because the carnal mind is enmity against God [this is the reason Adam ran away from God]: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." You cannot bring that old nature into obedience to God. You cannot reform man. [Romans 8:8-9](#) tells us: "So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God. But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that [lit., since] the Spirit of God dwell in you. . . ." You cannot please God in the flesh. You can only please Him when you yield to Him and come to the place where He can use you.

This brings me to consider what happens when a man is converted. Before our conversions, you and I were dead in trespasses and sins. We could walk around, we were physically alive, but we were spiritually dead. When a man hears the gospel, the Spirit of God applies it to his heart, and he trusts Christ. We say that he is born again. The spiritual nature is reborn, and he now has a capacity for God. There is no power in that new nature; so the Holy Spirit comes to dwell within him. This is what Paul meant when he wrote, "But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you . . ." ([Rom. 8:9](#)). In other words, the indwelling Spirit is the mark that you are a child

of God. The Holy Spirit is not something that you get ten days or so after you are converted. If you don't get Him at the moment you are converted, you are not converted because it is the Holy Spirit who regenerates -- we are "born of the Spirit" (see [John 3:8](#)). The Holy Spirit is there not only to help you but also to interpret to you the Word of God. And the Word of God is no longer foolishness to you, because a new world and a new life have been opened to you.

However, there is the struggle that goes on which Paul talks about in [Galatians 5:17](#): "For the flesh lusteth [warreth] against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would." There are these two natures within a believer. The old nature, this lower nature, this psychological part of man, wants to turn away from God. This spiritual part now wants to turn to God. If you are a child of God, you know about that conflict. There are times when you want to turn away from Him, and there are times when you want to turn to Him. This is the reason most of us are like a roller coaster in our Christian lives. We go up today, and it is great, but then we go down tomorrow. What a trip it is -- up and down! It ought not to be that way, but, unfortunately, most of us would have to testify that that is true of us.

In [1Corinthians 15:45](#) Paul talks about the Resurrection, and he has this to say: ". . . The first man Adam was made a living soul [that is, the psychological]; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit [that is, a life-giving spirit]." This is the difference between Adam No. 1 and Adam No. 2, between Adam in the Garden of Eden and the Lord Jesus Christ on the Cross. The Lord Jesus came to give His life that He might be a life-giving Spirit. Paul goes on to say in [Jude 1:46-47](#): "Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural [Adam was a psychological being]; and afterward that which is spiritual. The first man is of the earth, earthy: the second man is the Lord from heaven." This, I believe, is the big difference between Adam before his fall and the man today who is regenerated. We are today made sons of God and are given a spiritual nature with a capacity for God. Man's highest nature at the beginning was that God breathed into his breathing places, but that was a spirit that could fall. We have a nature today that is a sinful nature, and we will have it as long as we are in this body because it actually controls this body -- this is the psychological part of man. But at the moment of regeneration we were given a new nature which responds to God and cannot fall.

When I first studied psychology (it was one of my major areas of study at one time), they said that psychology was the study of the soul of man. Then they got away from that, and they said it was the study of the mind of man. Behaviorism came along and then Freudianism later on, and they took their theory of man further and farther away from anything psychological or even mental. Man became nothing in the world but a sort of robot or IBM computer. You can press a certain button and always get a certain reaction from him. As a result, the saying went around that psychology first lost its soul, and then it lost its mind. I do not know whether it has recovered it or not!

The thing that I want to emphasize here is that the flesh pulls man down and the Spirit pulls man up. Jude says that these apostates never get into the realm of the Spirit -- "having not the Spirit." They are "sensual"; they never get above the psychological state. Therefore, it is very easy to tell whether or not you are a child of God, my friend. Paul lists the works of the flesh in [Galatians 5:19-21](#), and if you are producing those in your

life, you are living in the flesh. He then lists the fruit of the Spirit in [verses 22-23](#). If you have those things in your life, you are a child of God. But the apostate does not have those things in his life. He cannot have them because he does not have the Spirit of God.

I have spent a little time with this because I feel it is very important that you and I understand ourselves and why we have all the conflicts and frustrations that we Christians have. We have two natures. The psalmist says that we are "fearfully and wonderfully made" (see [Ps. 139:14](#)). Man is a very complicated creature. A man walks this earth today with a body that is taken out of the dirt, but he also has a capacity for God. A man who wants to worship and serve God can become a son of God through faith in Jesus Christ -- what a glorious prospect this is!

What Believers Must Do In Days Of Apostasy (1:20-25)

Now having described the apostasy that was coming and the apostates who would come into the church, Jude mentions seven things which believers can do in days like these in which you and I are living.

[But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost \[\[Jude 1:20\]\(#\)\].](#)

"But ye beloved" -- he is talking to believers, those beloved of God. What can we do today?

1. "Building up yourselves on your most holy faith." What does he mean by that? Well, building up yourselves on your most holy faith means that you study the Word of God. It is my conviction that since God gave to us sixty-six books, He meant that we are to study all sixty-six of them -- not just [John 3](#) or [John 14](#) and other favorite passages. Oh, how many Bible classes go over and over the same books: John, Romans, maybe Ephesians, and they don't miss Revelation. Do not misunderstand me, all those books are very important, but what about the other sixty-two books? Why don't we study all of them? My friend, if you are going to build up yourself on your most holy faith, you must have the total Word of God. You cannot build a house without a foundation; then you will need to put up some timbers that will hold the roof; then you are going to need a roof on it and siding and plaster on the inside. And this is what the total Word of God will do for you. This is what we are to do in days of apostasy.

Both Peter and Paul urged believers to study the Word of God in days like these. Paul wrote in his swan song: "Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed . . ." ([2Tim. 2:15](#)). Then in the next chapter Paul said that all Scripture is given by inspiration of God. My friend, the recourse that you and I have as children of God in these days is the Word of God.

The reason many folk fall by the wayside is because the seed (which is the Word of God) fell among stones. It didn't get deeply rooted. Unless you study all of the Word of God, get down in the good, rich soil, you are not going to become a sturdy, healthy plant. It won't be long until you will be stepped on and the sun will burn you out. You will not be able to stand in days like these.

Peter in his second epistle, writing of the apostasy, says, "We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts: knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation" ([2Pet. 1:19-20](#)). You cannot just pull out one or two little verses and think you have a good knowledge of the Bible. It is a tragedy to build a system of doctrine based on a few isolated verses drawn out of the Scriptures.

This reminds me of the story of President Lincoln having his portrait painted. The artist kept shifting Lincoln around trying to get him at an angle so the wart on his face wouldn't show. Finally, after he had him adjusted to his satisfaction, he said, "Mr. Lincoln, how do you want me to paint you?" Lincoln said, "Paint me just as I am -- wart and all."

My friend, certainly there are parts of the Word of God that you will not enjoy reading. There are sections that will step on your toes, and you would like to avoid that. But today it is necessary to build up ourselves on our most holy faith because these are days of apostasy.

"Your most holy faith" does not refer to your own personal faith. Rather, it is the faith, the body of truth which has been given to us in the Word of God. When the church first came into existence, this was called the apostles' doctrine. Of this Mayor says:

The faith here is called 'most holy' because it comes to us from God, and reveals God to us, and because it is by its means that man is made righteous, and enabled to overcome the world.

2. "Praying in the Holy Ghost." Jude mentions the second thing we are to do in days of apostasy. The word Ghost is the Greek *pneuma*, more frequently translated "Spirit." "Praying in the Holy Spirit" is an unusual phrase, occurring at only one other place in the Scriptures. In the Epistle to the Ephesians, Paul mentions putting on the whole armor of God, and each piece of armor is for defense with the exception of two items. One offensive weapon is "Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints" ([Eph. 6:18](#)). The second offensive weapon was mentioned in [Jude 1:17](#), "the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God." This is precisely what Jude writes. First, we are to build up ourselves on our most holy faith; then we need to pray in the Spirit.

Many years ago in Dallas, Texas, there was a very fine man, Mr. Will Hawkins, who had a radio program which he called "The Radio Revival." I do not know of any program during the Depression and afterwards that influenced people more than his program did. One of the features of his radio broadcast was what he called a sword drill, a test of the knowledge of the Word of God, and I thought it was about the best way it could be used. My friend, you and I need a sword drill; that is, we need to listen to God first before He has to listen to us, because we could say a lot of foolish things. We are to take the sword of the Spirit, because we need to build up ourselves in the faith -- we should learn to use that sword.

Praying in the Holy Spirit is a little different from handing God a grocery list of "Gimme, gimme, gimme." Don't misunderstand me, petition, as it is called in theology, is a part of

prayer. But how about praise and how about worship? Our prayer should include adoration and praise to almighty God. Dr. Earl Radmacher once told me about directing a prayer meeting in a church he pastored. The prayer meetings had been pretty dead, as most church prayer meetings are, unfortunately. They should be the real powerhouse of the church body, but they usually are not. One night Dr. Radmacher announced that they were not going to have any requests but only praise and thanksgiving to God for what He had done for them. Dr. Radmacher said that it turned out to be the briefest prayer meeting they had ever had! It is amazing how few things we thank God for and how little praise goes up to Him. However, petition is certainly important, and prayer that includes that is a real ministry. When Paul asked the Christians in Rome to pray for him, he wrote: "Now I beseech you, brethren, for the Lord Jesus Christ's sake, and for the love of the Spirit, that ye strive together with me in your prayers to God for me" ([Rom. 15:30](#)). The word for "strive" is agonize. We are to pray like that.

Praying in the Holy Spirit means that we pray by means of the Holy Spirit; we are dependent upon Him. Paul wrote in [Romans 8:26](#), "Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered." You and I actually do not know what to pray for. We are like little children. When I take my little grandson to the store, he wants everything he sees. He asks for things that he shouldn't even have because they would not be good for him. Then I think, That's just the way we pray. We are like little children: "Lord, I want this -- Lord, give me that." God doesn't always give us what we want. Why doesn't He? Because when we pray like that, we are not praying in the Spirit. We need to learn to let the Holy Spirit make intercession for us.

Years ago a missionary in Venezuela sent me a little cross on which was printed a definition of prayer: "Prayer is the Holy Spirit speaking in the believer, through Christ, to the Father." That is a very good definition of prayer.

My friend, we need to learn to pray. No wonder the disciples, having heard the Lord Jesus pray and thinking of their own little paltry prayers, said, "Lord, teach us to pray" (see [Luke 11:1](#)). Many of us need that, but there is very little instruction today about learning to pray. Yet we need to learn to really pray in these days of apostasy.

Keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life [[Jude 1:21](#)].

This verse gives us two more things we as believers are to do in days of apostasy.

3. "Keep yourselves in the love of God." We need to recognize that God loves the believer. We have seen that Jude addresses the believers as "beloved." Let me repeat -- this does not imply that he loves them or that they love him but that they are beloved of God. Again, let me say that you cannot keep God from loving you, although you can put up an umbrella or a roof so that you will not feel the warmth of God's love. Jude is saying, "Keep yourselves out there in the sunshine of God's love." Let His love flood your heart and life. This is needed in days of apostasy.

4. "Looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life." There was a man here in Southern California, a professor in a seminary, whom I had asked to preach in the

church I served, and someone questioned that he really believed in the rapture of the church. So I had lunch with him and asked him this specific question: "Do you believe in the imminent coming of Christ?"

"I do."

"On what basis do you believe that He will take the church out? That is, on what grounds do you and I expect to be taken out at the time of the Rapture?"

He said very definitely, "I was saved because God extended mercy to me, and when He takes me out of the world at the time of the Rapture, it still will be by the mercy of God."

That is a good answer, and it cleared up all doubts of his position on the rapture of the church.

My friend, as we have seen, the mercy of God is the fact that God has a concern and care for you today. And He has an abundance -- He is rich in mercy. He was so concerned about you that He extended His mercy to you and saved you by His grace.

Notice that Jude says, "Looking for the mercy." The word looking is the Greek word *prosdechomai*, meaning "to expect, to wait for." The Lord Jesus wants us to live in an attitude of expectation for His return. At the time of the Rapture, I am expecting to leave this world, and I hope it will happen during my lifetime. But I will be going out because of His mercy, not because of who I am. If it depended upon who I am, I wouldn't make it.

When I first went to Nashville, Tennessee, there was a very fine Bible class there that had been taught the theory of a partial rapture; that is, that only the super-duper saints would go out at the Rapture. They were a wonderful group of folk, and they supported my ministry in Nashville. I even had the privilege of teaching the class several times. However, in talking with some of them, especially the leaders, they made it clear that they expected to go out at the time of the Rapture because they were the super-duper saints, but I had the feeling that they weren't sure about me. Well, I want them and everyone else to know that when the Lord takes the church out, I'm going along -- whether you like it or not -- because I am looking for that mercy of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Now notice Dr. Wuest's translation of [Jude 1:21](#):

With watchful care keep yourselves within the sphere of God's love, expectantly looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ resulting in life eternal.

[And of some have compassion, making a difference \[Jude 1:22\].](#)

5. "Of some have compassion." There is some question among Greek scholars as to the correct translation of this verse. Instead of "making a difference," I prefer the rendering "who are in doubt." There are a great many good, sincere folk today who are in doubt. They do have honest doubts, and we need to be patient with them. Being in the ministry I have had some difficulty in being patient with some folk. I remember a woman who came to our midweek Bible study in a church I served many years ago. Every week for six weeks she came to me with some question. I had the feeling that she was trying to trap me or trick me with her questions, and one night I answered her so sharply that she turned and walked out. The woman who always came with her was a member of my church, and

she came to me afterward and said, "Dr. McGee, be patient with her. She is a very brilliant woman. In fact, she is listed in Who's Who. But she has been in practically every cult here in Southern California, and she is really mixed up. Now she is trying to find her way out. Will you be patient with her?" Well, knowing her background, of course, I was patient after that and answered her questions the best I could. About three months later she accepted Christ as her Savior. I had a wonderful letter after she had returned to Ohio in which she told how the Lord was leading her.

My friend, we are living in days when there is so much doubt cast upon the Word of God that those who really want to believe it have problems in doing so. We do well to be patient with them -- they are honest doubters.

And others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire; hating even the garment spotted by the flesh [[Jude 1:23](#)].

6. "And others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire" refers to sinners whom we consider hopeless. It seems impossible that they will ever be saved. And yet I have seen some of these folk come to know Christ by hearing God's Word by radio. Jude admonishes us not to give them up -- "others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire." What a tremendous statement!

In [Zechariah 3:2](#) we read this: "And the LORD said unto Satan, The LORD rebuke thee, O Satan; even the LORD that hath chosen Jerusalem rebuke thee: is not this a brand plucked out of the fire?" When God intended to save Jerusalem, He said, "I am just taking a brand out of the fire." Apparently there is no one who is beyond redemption, if they want to be saved.

7. "Hating even the garment spotted by the flesh." The word flesh refers to the psychological part of man, the part of man that can go only so far. It can, for example, appreciate good music, but it cannot be acceptable to God. There have been attempts to come up with the right word for this psychological part of man. The word soul is not adequate because it doesn't express what it should. Some call it the selfish part of man. That is not a good definition because some psychological people are very generous although they are not Christian. Others speak of it as the animal, which is even worse. Although these people generally attempt to satisfy the lower nature, animal is not the proper word. Still others call them intellectual, which is the worst one of all. Lange, in his Commentary on the Holy Scriptures, attempts to adequately describe these folk:

He is becoming flesh, wholly carnal or animal. If allowed to continue he will become utterly dehumanized, or that worst of all creatures, an animal with a reason, but wholly fleshly in its ends and exercises, or with a reason which is but the servant of the flesh, making him worse than the most ferocious wild beast -- a very demon -- a brutal nature with a fiend's subtlety only employed to gratify such brutality. Man has the supernatural, and this makes the awful peril of his state. By losing it, or rather by its becoming degraded to be a servant instead of a lord, he falls wholly into nature, where he cannot remain stationary, like the animal who does not "leave the habitation to which God first appointed him." The higher being, thus utterly fallen, must sink into the demonic, where evil becomes his god, if not, as Milton says, his good.

The fact is that the child of God should hate "even the garment spotted by the flesh." God cannot use anything that the flesh produces. Everything that Vernon McGee does in the flesh is repulsive to God; He hates it. And we should learn to hate it.

This little Epistle of Jude closes with a glorious benediction.

Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy,

To the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen [[Jude 1:24-25](#)].

Let me give you a literal translation:

Now unto him who is able to keep you from stumbling, and to present you (make you stand) before the presence of his glory blameless with great rejoicing, to the only wise God our Savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory and majesty and might and authority, before all time both now and forever. Amen.

If you want to know the place that Jesus Christ should have in your life, especially in these days of apostasy, here it is in this marvelous benediction.

"Through Jesus Christ our Lord" -- He is God. And He is our Lord; He should be the Lord of our lives. Glory should be given to Him. We should glorify Him, tell how great He is, how wonderful He is, how mighty He is and mighty to save. He is majestic, the King of kings and Lord of lords. He is mighty -- all power is given unto Him in heaven and in earth. This universe has not slipped from under His control. All authority belongs to Him, and whether you like it or not, you are going to bow the knee to Him someday.

In these days of apostasy, God's children need to bring glory to the name of Jesus Christ and to try to hold Him up before a gainsaying world.

Bibliography

(Recommended for Further Study)

Coder, S. Maxwell. Jude: The Acts of the Apostates. Chicago, Illinois: Moody Press, 1958.

Ironside, H. A. Exposition of the Epistle of Jude. Neptune, New Jersey: Loizeaux Brothers, n.d.

Kelly, William. Lectures on the Epistle of Jude. Denver, Colorado: Wilson Foundation, 1970.

Wolff, Richard. A Commentary on the Epistle of Jude. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan Publishing House, 1960.

Wuest, Kenneth S. In These Last Days: II Peter, II, III John, and Jude in the Greek New Testament for the English Reader. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1954.